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Nixon Will Admit Role, Rhodes Says

United Press International

House Republican Leader John J. Rhodes said yesterday it would be "useful" if former President Nixon publicly admitted his guilt in the Watergate cover-up, and predicted he eventually would do so.

But the Arizona representative added that any attempt to prosecute Mr. Nixon on Watergate-related charges would bring "further division of the country and would not be beneficial."

Asked during a televised news conference if Mr. Nixon should issue a statement about his involvement in the scandal, which has resulted in 38 men either pleading guilty or being convicted of criminal actions, Rhodes replied: "I think it would be useful and I would imagine at some time or another, President Nixon will do this."

Rhodes said, "The timing he would choose would be up to him, of course." But he pointed out that "the former President will be called upon to testify in other cases and I should think that any statement that he made right now could be prejudicial to that testimony."

Rhodes was interviewed on "Meet the Press" (NBC, WRC).

Rhodes said no attempt should be made to press charges against Mr. Nixon because "he has been President of the United States and many of us feel that, except for the Watergate matter, he did a very noble job of it. I think that because he has been President and done that type of job perhaps sets him apart from many of the people of the country."

In a separate interview yesterday on "Issues and Answers" (ABC, WMAL) House Speaker Carl Albert said flatly the House would not pursue the impeachment process beyond receiving the report of its Judiciary Committee probably this week.